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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, TS

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S SPEECH OF APRIL 8 ON LAW OF THE SEA
REF: STATE 265109

1. CHARGE MET TODAY WITH TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY
DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS AHMED GHEZAL AND PROVIDED
HIM WITH FRENCH LANGUAGE TEXT OF SECRETARY'S SPEECH.
DURING MEETING POINTS CONTAINED REFTEL WERE MADE, WITH
PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON REMAINING ISSUES. GHEZAL DID NOT
COMMENT ON MARINE SCIENCE RESEARCH AND IN REGARD TO DEEP
SEA BED REGIME MERELY NOTED TUNISIA'S DEEP INTEREST AS
DEVELOPING COUNTRY IN HOW RESOURCES ARE SHARED. HE
COMMENTED AT GREATER LENGTH ON DISPUTE SETTLEMENT MECHANISM.
2. GHEZAL SAID GOT STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT THERE MUST BE
AN IMPARTIAL INTERNATIONAL ARBITER TO SETTLE LOS DISPUTES.
GOT TOOK LOS CONFERENCE EXTREMELY SERIOUSLY AS STATE WITH
EXTRAORDINARILY LONG COAST LINE IN CONGESTED AREA OF
MEDITERRANEAN WHICH FELT NEED FOR GREATER SECURITY,
PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF ITS "VOISINAGE" (APPARENT REFERENCE
TO CURRENT DISPUTE WITH LIBYA OVER OFF-SHORE OIL).
3. GHEZAL SAID THAT GOT WOULD GIVE CAREFUL STUDY TO
SECRETARY'S SPEECH. WHILE OUTCOME OF LOS CONFERENCE
OF REAL IMPORTANCE TO TUNISIA AND ITS BASIC POSITION WOULD
HAVE TO BE DETERMINED BY ITS OWN SELF-INTEREST, IT APPEARED
FROM DESCRIPTION OF MAIN POINTS OF SECRETARY'S SPEECH
THAT USG AND GOT DID NOT DIFFER ON ESSENTIALS. GHEZAL
NOTED THAT GOT'S LEADING LOS EXPERT, AMBASSADOR KEDADI,
WAS IN NEW YORK FOR LOS CONFERENCE. CHARGE SAID WE WERE
AWARE OF THAT AND FELT SURE USUN IN TOUCH WITH KEDADI
(TUNIS 1672). FINALLY, GHEZAL NOTED THAT GOT SHARED VIEW
THAT IT EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT NEGOTIATIONS ON LOS
TREATY BE CONCLUDED SWIFTLY. KING

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TUNISIA